amounts each month over and above the statutory contribution by salaried employees covered under EPF scheme;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government are taking this move to ward off the anticipatory rush of additional deposits from subscribers in the new fiscal year;

(c) whether it is a also a fact that because of the increase in the rate of interest on EPF to 9.5 per cent the EPFO finds it difficult as it is facing Rs. 927.15 Crores of deficit; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) and (d) The Government has not notified the rate of of interest for the subscribers of employees Provident Fund for 2004-05, so far. Therefore, the issue of deficit of Rs. 927.15 Crores does not arise at this stage.

Decline in Unemployment

3173. SHRI SK. KHABIR UDDIN AHMED: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to I.L.O.global unemployment has shown a decline in 2004; and

(b) if so, the performance of India in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Figures for 2004 being not available, comparison regarding increase/decrease in unemployment in India can not be made.

Labour Policies Adopted by Foreign Countries

†3174. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several countries including America and Japan consider the labour policy of the Government of India the main obstacle in the development of the country;

(b) if **so,** the details thereof;

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.